

STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ACCOUNTING & WORKPLACE: CAUSES OF STRESS & EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES OF STRESS REDUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a common aspect of human existence. Although it is experienced by humans in a variety of ways and to varying degrees of intensity, it is not tied to any particular culture. Widespread research has shown that stress in the workplace has significant practical and financial repercussions. Increased absenteeism is thought to be correlated with organizational stress. When the demands of the role, your abilities, and the resources and supports available are out of sync, workplace stress can result. Given the strain accountants experience from both employers and clients, accounting can be seen as one of the more stressful professions. People who work in the accounting industry are known for having stressful jobs, especially during the busiest season when tax deadlines are approaching. These high levels of stress result in overburdened, disgruntled workers and businesses with excessive staff turnover. Therefore, stress management is the practice of using intentional measures to reduce one's overall level of stress, especially chronic stress. This paper explains causes, effects of stress and techniques of stress reduction in Accounting and workplace.

Keywords: *Stress Management, Workplace, Organizational Stress, Staff Turnover, Disgruntled Workers.*

Introduction

The term "stress" is ambiguous. Typically, it is described in terms of the internal and external factors that contribute to stressful events as well as the signs and symptoms that people go through when they are under stress. Stress is a state of tension felt by those who are subjected to unusual demands, restrictions, or opportunities. The definition of stress covers mental, bodily, and emotional pressure as well as how it affects physical and psychological health. When a demand exceeds a person's capacity for coping and upsets their psychological equilibrium, stress results. When a worker believes a situation is too challenging to handle and, as a result, dangerous to his or her health, stress develops at work.

A person's level of stress, particularly chronic stress, can be controlled through a variety of techniques and psychotherapies known as stress management. These techniques and therapies are typically used to enhance daily functioning. One of the secrets to leading a fulfilling life in contemporary culture is the practice of stress management. Stress management offers a range of techniques to control anxiety and preserve general well-being in the face of the many pressures that life frequently brings.

People who work in the accounting industry are known for having stressful jobs. Particularly near the end of the year, accountants must cope with a demanding and heavy workload as well as the stress of deadlines. All of this while attempting to raise billable hour totals. This may lead to extreme stress, which is a problem that is becoming more and more prevalent in accounting organizations. Employees who are under stress cannot perform at their best since it jeopardizes their mental wellness.

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Objective of the Study

- To analyze causes, effects of stress in accounting and workplace and techniques of stress reduction.

Research Methodology

- **Type of Research:** Descriptive/Expressive Research
- **Type of Data Source used:** Secondary Data/Data source. The data has been extracted from various sources like research articles, publications, accounting websites and articles.

Literature Review

Kelly and Barrett (2012) categorized the organizational factors that contribute to stress in the accounting industry as follows: role conflict, role uncertainty, qualitative and quantitative congestion, dominant control, career advancement, passive control, and insufficient qualitative and quantitative requirements. According to their research (Kelly & Barrett, 2012), there is a significant connection between being overworked in accounting and the following factors: Work-related stress; qualitative overload, which is ranked highest; and quantitative congestion. Role plays, role uncertainty, and professional advancement all significantly positively correlate with accounting stress. According to Sohal & Rehman (2015), stress is a result of social environment because it is possible for a person to feel stressed out due to the people in his social circle. Stress can have both harmful and beneficial effects. The typical response to danger is stress. Non-specific tasks are defined by authors Piccoli, Emig, and Hildebeitel (1988) as psychological or physical responsibilities. Under stressful conditions, the pituitary gland releases hormones that stimulate the adrenal glands, which in turn cause noticeable muscle tension and anxiety. Devi and Mohan (2015) used a questionnaire to collect information from 200 students at two separate colleges in Kerala, India. This study examined the five main stressors that students experience: academic, social, familial, emotional, and financial stress. The main cause of academic stress, as reported by the students, was found to be academic issues. The main stressor for families, according to the respondents of this study, was a lack of family support. Additionally, it was said that the main emotional stressor was a lack of self-esteem. The highest levels of stress are caused by the following organizational factors of stress in accounting: the inadequate burden of roles, the uncertainty of the application, the professional advancement, care, and insufficient opportunities to participate in decisions that ultimately affect them, according to Gaertner and Ruhe (1981). They found that accounting beginners were more stressed than other accountants. According to Ozkan and Ozdevecioglu (2013), accounting-related stress and all types of burnout are positively correlated. It is a proven truth that accountants experience increasing levels of work-related stress before they burn out. Accounting professionals may experience occasional job stress, but chronic stress can have long-lasting impacts. One of the most significant psychological conditions of the twenty-first century is burnout. In this regard, precautions need to be made in order to lessen accountant stress on an individual and organizational level.

Types of Work Stress

The following list of four workplace stress types includes:

- **Physical Requirements:** A lot of office jobs involve physically demanding activities, such as working in cramped spaces, in arduous conditions, and while being exposed to hazardous products.
- **Work Requirements:** Work demands are the feelings of uncertainty about the direction a job will take you in and whether the activities and tasks will remain the same. Stress brought on by this ambiguity shows itself as emotions of helplessness, worry about the direction of one's work, and time constraints.
- **Role Requirements:** When an employee is faced with unreasonable or inconsistent expectations, role conflict results.
- **Interpersonal Requirements:** A variety of problems, including emotional difficulties, sexual harassment, a lack of management, and inadequate leadership, can contribute to stress.

Causes of Stress at Workplace

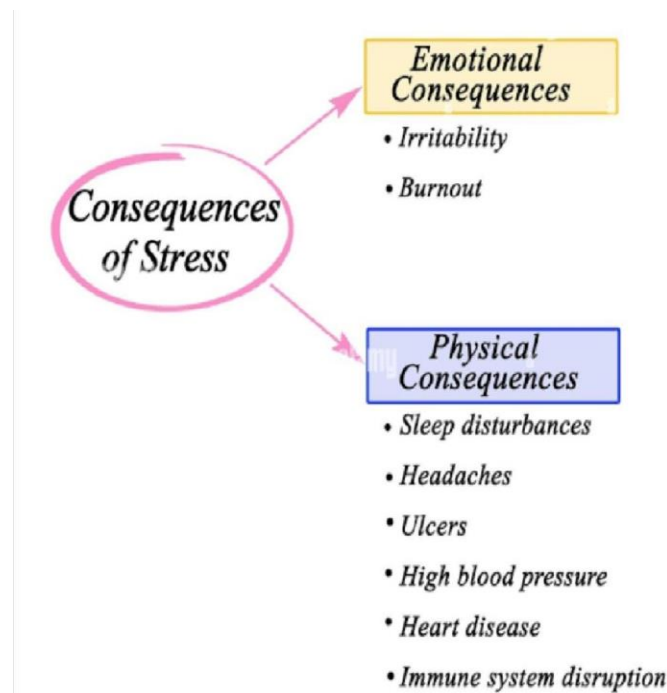
Stress at work might stem from many different things or simply one particular facet of a worker's duties. Both employers and their employees may be impacted by workplace stress. Although the

economy is currently improving, job security was not always guaranteed in recent years. All industries and business types experience downsizing, layoffs, mergers, and bankruptcies; this results in significant changes for employees. This generally results in a stressful atmosphere at work. The following are some of the factors that have been linked to job stress:

- **Low morale:** Workers frequently feel helpless when morale is low. Their productivity declines as a result of them becoming complacent. The most demanding occupations are those of a secretary, waiter, middle manager, police officer, and editor. All of these professions are characterized by the service-oriented nature of their duties: They have limited influence over the course of events and must respond to the requests and timeframes of others. Inadequate work descriptions, unfair labor practices, and a sense of having too little authority are all common in these types of employment.
- **Overload:** This is the degree to which people perceive the demands of their workload and the corresponding time constraints as a source of pressure, i.e., inflated deadlines and expectations, frequently as a result of super achievement by the most talented, technology overload, unmanageable workloads, and understaffing for work that has already been scheduled.
- **Management Style:** Management style is another element in stressful workplace circumstances. Workers don't feel supported by their coworkers or employers when there is inadequate communication at work and they aren't included in decision-making processes. In addition, the consequences on work-life balance brought on by a lack of family-friendly regulations may result in greater stress.
- **Career Concerns:** Career issues like job insecurity or a lack of promotion prospects are another cause of workplace stress. The CDC also identifies rapid changes with little to no learning curve as dangerous.
- **Traumatic Events:** Some jobs are riskier than others, which is true but not ideal. Every day, a lot of people who work in the criminal justice field, first responders, firefighters, and the military face risky situations. On occasion, this makes performing routine tasks challenging. Positions like those mentioned above are extremely difficult because of this.
- **Work Environment:** The majority of the aforementioned reasons for workplace stress are emotional, however a poor work environment can also produce physical stress. The workplace environment is crucial in reducing occupational stress, whether this is due to loudness, a lack of privacy, poor climate management, or inadequate facilities.

Consequences of Stress

- Heart Diseases
- High Blood Pressure
- Ulcers
- Headache
- Sleep Disturbance
- Depression
- Exhaustion
- Burnout
- Moodiness
- Job Dissatisfaction
- Diabetes
- Heart Attacks
- High cholesterol
- Premature death



Reducing Accounting & Workplace Stress

The Stress Management in the Workplace training programme offers patented stress management techniques that are unequalled in the quantifiable outcomes they will generate for you and your company. More than simple advice is needed for stress management in the workplace. We are being pushed in many directions as a result of shifting economic conditions. There are overlapping responsibilities and stresses in both professional and personal life. As a result, the effects of stress at work result from both what happens to each of us at work and outside of it.

Preventing Job Stress

If workers are under harmful amounts of stress, a management can hire a consultant or another unbiased outsider to make recommendations for a novel strategy. Managers can, however, avoid job stress altogether in a variety of ways. The best strategy frequently combines stress management with organizational reform.

Organizations can lessen employee stress in the following ways, in particular:

Allow Flexi-Time and Remote Working

Strict work schedules are a key stress-inducer, particularly for women. It has been shown that allowing employees to work from home or even on a flexible schedule boosts productivity. By giving staff the freedom to manage their own time, management not only demonstrates trust in them but also relieves working parents of additional stress caused by worries about child care. Just make sure management controls this kind of flexibility by setting up clear expectations and rules, as well as by being transparent with employees.

Intentional Job Design

- Create positions that allow employees to put their abilities to use while also giving them a sense of purpose.
- Set up work schedules that are in line with demands and obligations from outside the workplace.
- Think about flexible scheduling- many companies now permit telecommuting, which eases the stress of having to be somewhere at a given hour (which enables people to better balance their personal lives).
- Make sure that each employee's workload is appropriate for their skills and resources by keeping an eye on it.

Clear and Open Communication

- Promote an open communication among the staff while teaching them to be stress-aware.
- Define the tasks and responsibilities of employees in detail to avoid any uncertainty.
- lessen ambiguity regarding potential career paths and job opportunities in the future.

Positive Workplace Culture

- Create opportunities for workplace socialization.
- Keep an eye out for symptoms of bullying or unhappiness, and fight workplace discrimination (based on race, gender, national origin, religion, or language).

Employee Accountability

- Ensure that employees have the chance to influence the choices and actions that have an impact on their jobs.
- Utilize a participative leadership approach and involve as many employees as possible in problem-solving to reduce stress.

Conclusion

Thus, we conclude that stress at work and in the workplace lowers productivity, intensifies managerial demands, and worsens a variety of illnesses. Stress at work has an impact on how well the brain performs, including cognitive processes like learning, memory, and concentration. Many events in the workplace, such as issues with the physical environment, interactions with peers, superiors, and subordinates, and career development stresses such as a lack of job security, a feeling of obsolescence, and inadequate advancement, can be stressful.

The widespread nature of the current phenomenon in practise and the numerous, well-documented negative effects of stress on accounting present a significant challenge for researchers seeking to comprehend and explain, as well as for those working in the field seeking to address the social phenomenon. As a result, companies ought to create stress-free working conditions. We may utilize practical strategies like flextime and remote working, allocating workloads in accordance with individuals' skills and expertise, open and honest communication, a supportive work environment, and employee accountability to lessen accounting and workplace stress.

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